education, children's programmes, science & technology, entertainment and sports. It also stipulates provision of assistance for visiting reporters and production teams, as well as technicians and officials from either side.

(viii) MoU on Space Cooperation signed during the visit of Director, ISRO to China from July 9-17, 1997. The two sides decided the following action items for cooperation: small satellites, satellite based disaster management, detection of oil and gas using remote sensing, SAR data processing, TT&C support, and procurement of components, materials and sub-systems.

Sri Lanka: A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between India and Sri Lanka on December 28,1998 on the setting up of an India-Sri Lanka Foundation with matching contribution of Rupees 2 crores from both sides. Teh Foundation would work towards promoting bilateral exchanges in the field of art, culture, trade, commerce and science & technology. The Foundation would be governed by an independent Board.

Nepal: A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between India and Nepal on June 5, 1997 to further strengthen and promote bilateral cooperation in the field of civil aviation. Under the MoU, the seat-capacity entitlement was revised from 4000 to 6000 seats per week in each direction for the designated airlines of each side. The designated airline of Nepal was also permitted to operate air services to two additional points in India, viz. Bangalore and Lucknow.

Anomalise in Pensionary Benefits and Allowances

2546. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state the details of steps taken/contemplated to remove the anomalies and extend justice to different categories of civilian employees of Central Government and its instrumentalities in matters of pensionary benefits and allowanes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M. R. JANARTHANAN): In the case of Central Government employees pensionary benefits are governed by Central Civil services (Pension) Rules, 1972 and grant of allowances is regulated through various executive instructions issued from time to time in respect different types of allowances admissible. As regards pensinory benefits, in the strict sense, no anomalous position exists under the Cental Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972. In the case of pension, Dearness Relief is given on a flat rate which is applicable to all the pensioners as per the Fifth Pay Commission recommenndations.

Five Days a Week

2547. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that five days a week has become curse to masses where public dealing is involved:

(b) whether the purpose for which five days a week was adopted stands now defeated;

(c) whether the Pay Commission has also recommended to wipe out this order in the light of developing countries; and

(d) if so, by when this decison will be taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING.) REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M. R. JANARTHANAN): (a) to (d) Five-day week was introduced in June, 1985 in consultaion with the Staff Unions under Joint Consultative Machinery & Compulsory Arbitration (JCM) maintaing the weekly working hours as under the 6 days week working. Working hours were subsequently increased to the existing level of 42.1/2 hours in November, 1986 as per the reommendations of the Fourth Pay Commission.

In the light of the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission, various Departments have been advised to review the existing arrangement and switch over to six-days week working where-ever feasible in organisations whose functions are predominatly marked by public dealings or of commercial nature.